

In the unprecedented times of a global pandemic, which is threatening progress on the 2030 Agenda and placing a wide spectrum of human rights at risk, it is crucial we try to safeguard progress and learn from each other by showcasing good practices. Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) are a way to highlight practices and policies that have proved to be effective in building resilience, in tackling inequalities and discrimination, and which help to ensure no one will be left behind, including as part of the COVID-19 response and recovery.

The UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR) has developed tools and approaches that can help integrate human rights information and guidance into analysis and reporting, including in the VNRs. With a rights-based approach being central to COVID-19 response and to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its pledge to leave no one behind, these tools can help place people and rights at the center of the VNR reports, they can help guide national progress monitoring, identify acceleration points and trade-offs.

This document provides an overview of the international human rights mechanisms' work with hyperlinks to the relevant country pages. This information can augment reporting on SDGs with corresponding rights (e.g. water, health, housing). It can also help identify groups at risk of being left behind, those furthest behind, and effective ways of addressing their situation. Page two of the document provides links to relevant guidance on participation and inclusion, data collection, and ways to systematically link the 2030 Agenda and human rights follow-up processes.

OHCHR and the international human rights mechanisms have also developed COVID-19 guidance on particular issues, rights, and population groups, which can help assess risks, gaps and progress made, as well as chart a way towards building back better, greener, more equal, and more just societies. You can access this guidance from:

[ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/COVID19Guidance.aspx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/COVID19Guidance.aspx)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

Reports prepared by and for international human rights mechanisms (Special Procedures, Treaty Bodies, Universal Periodic Review) carry a wealth of data and information relevant to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and for COVID-19 response and recovery.

The most relevant country information since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda is featured below. You can find further information in the [Universal Human Rights Index](#), OHCHR's online database, which compiles recommendations from all human rights mechanisms for every country and allows searching through them by SDGs, SDG targets, affected groups and/or themes.

More details on the Universal Human Rights Index and SDGs are available from uhri.ohchr.org/en/sdgs.

How are special procedures mandates linking their work to the 2030 Agenda? To find out, visit tinyurl.com/SP-2030.

Work of the International Human Rights Mechanisms related to COVID-19:

[COVID-19 and special procedures](#)

[COVID-19 and Treaty Bodies](#)

SPECIAL PROCEDURES

Since 2016, Japan has been visited by UN independent experts focusing on freedom of expression, on housing and on leprosy.

Visit tinyurl.com/Special-Procedures for more information.

TREATY BODIES

Since 2016, Japan was reviewed by the Committee on Enforced Disappearances, Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

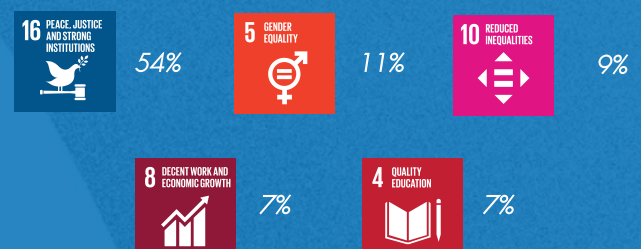
Visit tinyurl.com/TB-JPN for more information.

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR)

Japan was last reviewed by the UPR in November 2017. The country received 217 recommendations and accepted 145 recommendations, touching upon a variety of SDGs.

If the country wishes to prepare a mid-term UPR report, it can submit one prior to its UPR review, scheduled for 2023. Systematically linking the VNR and the UPR reporting processes can benefit both reports and result in improved coherence in relevant policies, programmes and follow up to the 2030 Agenda, human rights agenda, and it can contribute to a successful COVID-19 response and recovery.

Visit tinyurl.com/UPR-JPN for more information.



The icons show which five SDGs received the most attention during the country's UPR process (as indicated by the percentage of UPR recommendations corresponding to a specific SDG).

Source: Universal Human Rights Index

PROMOTING MEANINGFUL, SAFE AND INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION

One of the central principles of the 2030 Agenda is the requirement for all its processes to be as participatory and inclusive as possible. Special efforts are often needed to reach out to those at risk of being left behind or not being heard.

Those affected by government's decisions should be able to communicate their needs and interests as well as support tailoring, implementing and reviewing public policies and programmes. In the context of a global pandemic, ensuring meaningful and inclusive participation poses an additional challenge and burden on the VNR countries.

Guidance and practical recommendations on participation, developed by OHCHR and independent experts, aim to help secure inclusive, transparent and accountable SDG implementation.

Guidelines for States on the effective implementation of the right to participate in public affairs
Visit: [ohchr.org/participationguidelines](https://www.ohchr.org/participationguidelines)

Practical recommendations for the participation of civil society in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda
Visit: undocs.org/A/HRC/41/41/Add.2

UN General Assembly report: Civil society space, poverty and national policy

Webinar: In the shadow of COVID-19: Lessons learned on civic space and public freedoms

HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO DATA (HRBAD)

Data collection, disaggregation and analysis is a crucial tool for SDG implementation and reporting on progress made as well as for a targeted and effective response to COVID-19. However, devising disaggregation of indicators (or not) is not a norm or value-neutral exercise.

A human rights-based approach to data has much to offer. It can bring together relevant data stakeholders and develop communities of practice that improve the quality, relevance and use of data and statistics in line with international human rights norms and principles.

Human rights indicators: Tools for measuring progress
Visit: tinyurl.com/HR-indicators

Human rights-based approach to data: Leaving no one behind in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
Visit: tinyurl.com/HR-to-data

Human Rights Indicators Tables with SDG Indicators
Visit: tinyurl.com/SDG-IND

How Covid-19 is changing the world: A statistical perspective [Volume I](#) [Volume II](#)

NATIONAL MECHANISMS FOR REPORTING AND FOLLOW-UP (NMRF)

Most States have established structures or processes for 2030 Agenda and for human rights reporting and implementation.

Systematically connecting these structures and making sure they work hand in hand will improve coherence and reporting quality as well as help secure greater participation and ownership. It will also ease reporting burdens and allow for sharing of information and analysis to make sure no one is left behind, including in the context of COVID-19.

Practical guide to effective State engagement with international human rights mechanisms

Visit: tinyurl.com/NMRFguide

National and sub-national structures for the 2030 Agenda implementation, monitoring and reporting



National structures for human rights reporting and follow up and bodies with a human rights mandate (e.g. national human rights institutions)

NATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKING DATABASE (NRTD)

OHCHR can, upon request, support States in establishing a [national recommendations tracking database](#). This is an online tool available in English, Spanish, French, Arabic and Russian that facilitates recording, tracking and reporting on the implementation of human rights mechanisms recommendations.

The database is customized for the requesting country and can significantly ease reporting burdens under both human rights and sustainable development agendas, it can also facilitate assigning responsibilities and tracking progress.

Contact nrtddsupport@ohchr.org for more information.